

THE
MONTHLY



CALIFORNIA
LIBRARY

JUL 8 - 1941

RECEIVED
MAY 10 1941
LIBRARY OF SCIENCES

GULL
BULLETIN

VOLUME 23

SAN FRANCISCO, JULY, 1941

NUMBER 7

Ravens in San Francisco

In the interest of securing data relative to the occurrence of infrequent or casual avian visitants to San Francisco the writer has kept notes during the past several years on such species as they have been observed. The following notes pertain to the raven (*Corvus corax*).

According to Grinnell and Wythe (Pac. Coast Avifauna, 18, 1927:101) ravens were "In 1850 'very common along the roadside from San Francisco to San Mateo'; but now rare except around Point Reyes and along the sea-coast of Sonoma County." A pair is also recorded as having been seen at Lake Merced, San Francisco County, on July 23, 1911.

Between June, 1938, and June, 1941, the following personal records were made of ravens seen in or flying over Golden Gate Park: 1938, June 25 (2), July 6 (2), October 16 (4), November 30 (1), December 7 (1); 1940, December 24 (1); 1941, May 5 (1), May 13 (1), May 23 (1). The figures in parentheses indicate the number of individuals seen at one time. This makes a total of fourteen ravens seen on nine different days over a period of three years. It might be well to mention that the proportion of time spent out-of-doors by the writer, at which time only ravens might be seen or heard, was relatively very small, averaging perhaps less than one hour per day.

In addition to the above records kept by the writer there have been twelve records published in the GULL during this same period of time. Bolander (GULL, May, 1938) states that on March 30, 1938, four were seen and "A pair regularly noted up to May 17th are probably nesting on the cliffs near Mussel Rock." Other recorded dates of observation for various portions of San Francisco are: 1938, July 17 and July 25, October 11, November 7 and 8, December 18; 1939, May 5, April 16; 1940, July 14, October 13.

The species thus has been noted during eight of the twelve months in the year, no records having been obtained for January, February, August and September. It would appear, therefore, that ravens occur in San Francisco fairly frequently, judging from the number of casual observations made.

Robert T. Orr, San Francisco, California. June 19, 1941.



State Convention of the National Audubon Society

The first State Convention of the National Audubon Society and its California Affiliated Groups was held in Monterey, May 9, 10, 11, 1941, at the Hotel San Carlos.

The convention began with an informal dinner Friday evening, at which C. A. Harwell, California Representative, presided. Seventy-five attended this dinner. Two motion pictures were shown, one by Miss Helen S. Pratt, and another "The

Galapagos" taken by "The Lack-Venables Expedition." Mrs. Mary V. Hood gave a demonstration of the "Automatic Kodochrome Projector."

Saturday morning Mrs. Harriet W. Myers, President, California Audubon Society, presided. A picture on "Wildlife Tours" was shown by Mr. Harwell. Mr. John H. Baker addressed the meeting on "Audubon Nature Camp in California" and Miss Helen S. Pratt spoke on "Junior Audubon Clubs." Dr. Gayle Pickwell, President, Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, then took the chair and the subject of "The Branch Plan of Organization and New Affiliated Societies" was brought up by Mr. Baker. A considerable discussion on this matter followed.

In the afternoon our own President, James Moffitt, shared honors with Miss Laura Greeley, President, Los Angeles Audubon Society, in presiding. Under the general headings "Research" and "Direct Protection Activities," several addresses were delivered as follows: "Audubon Research Fellowship," Dr. Alden H. Miller, Director, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California; "Highlights of Condor Watching," Mr. Carl Koford, Audubon Society Research Fellow, University of California; "Status of the White-tailed Kite," Mr. Laidlaw Williams; "Sanctuaries," Mrs. Alma Stultz; "Some Experiences with Wild Animals" (illustrated), Dr. Pickwell; "Legislation," Mr. Hugh Worcester; and "Feather Campaign," Mr. John H. Baker.

Saturday evening approximately 200 delegates and friends attended the banquet. Mr. Baker acted as toastmaster. A most instructive and entertaining talk by Kenneth I. Fulton, Private Secretary to Culbert L. Olson, Governor of California, on the many unexcelled features of our great State was thoroughly enjoyed. Mrs. Dorothy Dean Sheldon told about the photographic exhibit and how the prizes were awarded. Mr. Baker mentioned several prominent wildlife enthusiasts, spoke of their work and asked them in turn to stand that all might see them.

The prize-winning Kodochromes were shown—then motion pictures in color of "Beautiful Birds of National Audubon Society Southern Sanctuaries" taken by S. A. Grimes and Allan Cruickshank, and "The California Condor" filmed by J. R. Pemberton. That might have been all but since Bert Harwell was present there was an insistent demand that he preside at the piano. Bert's bird calls and songs as well as his whistling and playing are always popular.

Sunday morning the visitors formed into several groups. Two fishing boats left Monterey Harbor with the more adventurous in search of the Black-footed Albatrosses. Another group drove down the coast to see the Sea Otters, others visited the very worth-while Pacific Grove Natural History Museum, while others visited Point Lobos Park. Finally all the groups gathered at this park for luncheon, after which many left for home. A few with more time to spare drove up Carmel Valley and visited Dr. J. M. Linsdale at the Frances Simes Hastings Natural History Reservation.



June Field Trip

On Sunday, June 15, 1941, a small group consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Stephens; Mesdames Anabel and Kelly; Misses Berg, Cohen, Gilliam, Roscoe and Stanton and Mr. Leffler went to Ross, Marin County. The day was overcast but quite warm.

Mesdames Kelly and Stephens left the group to investigate an unusual hummingbird's nest, at the home of Mrs. T. T. Kent, which had been reported by Mrs. Mary L. Courtright. This nest is in a *Cedrus deodara* tree in the front garden of the Kent home. It is made of plant down, buff in color, with cobwebs on the outside, and placed on a moss foundation, a typical Black-chinned Hummingbird's nest. At the rear of the home is an old sycamore tree from which was gathered the plant down for the nest. As we watched, the mother bird came and fed the young, and we were able to see the dusky markings on her throat and also the white tips of the tail. She soon discovered us under the tree and became very excited, flying back and forth, perching on a nearby wire, giving little "squeaking" notes.

This nest was first found by Miss Augusta Samuel, a member of the Kent household, who watched the building of it and gave much data regarding it. At the time of the discovery, May 13th, the hummer was just beginning to build, but it was so different from other hummingbirds' nests which had been built in this same tree for years, that Miss Samuel realized it was quite an "unusual" nest. On the third of June the eggs were hatched, and Miss Samuel saw the mother feeding the young.

Early in May, Mrs. Kent showed Mrs. Otis H. Smith the beginnings of this nest which were "not like any other they had ever had," and also a beautiful Allen Hummingbird's nest in the same tree. From June 19 to 21 Mrs. Smith spent many hours watching the nest and the following description is given by her.

The nest is fastened to a slender descending twig, under a large branch, and is made of the "pubescent down of young sycamore leaves held together with cobwebs." This nest can be observed from three different viewpoints, from one angle you see little more than the sycamore down, a lovely soft brown in color and cocoon shaped, on a moss foundation. From the porch of the home the nest looks fully as large as the usual Anna Hummingbird's nest, but if a diagonal line could be drawn from the left hand side of the nest to the lower right side, the right side would be of the brown sycamore down and the left side of the same material as the under cushion, but from the position of the birds in the nest this part appears to be entirely foundation. It looks as if the mother bird had padded the twig, with its short points, very well indeed with moss. From another viewpoint the nest appears to be placed on this green material on a slightly longer stubby twig, giving it the appearance of being a very small affair. After the young were hatched the nest received much hard wear from all the exercising the young went through, preening and being fed, so that by the time they were able to leave, the nest began to spread and get pretty ragged around the top but never was mashed down completely. One young always was higher in the nest than the other. On June 19th. one of the young nearly fell out of the nest, and its "little wings went so fast that one could scarcely see them move as he clung to the edge of the nest." There was much downy white under the tail and the young were very gray about the throat and neck.

Sunday, June 22nd, it rained lightly all afternoon. Miss Samuel saw one leave the nest at 9:15 a.m. and perch on a bare branch near the front porch, and the other left at 6 p.m. On the 23rd she saw the mother feeding the young perched on the bare branches of the cedar and sycamore trees. On the 25th they were all feeding among the pentstemons in the garden and by the 26th it was no longer possible to tell them apart.

In the "Directory to the Bird-Life of the San Francisco Bay Region," by Joseph Grinnell and Margaret W. Wythe, there are but three records of this species: two specimens taken in Hayward, May 4, 1875, and April 21, 1906, by W. O. Emerson, and one in Marin County, San Geronimo, March 3, 1912, by J. Mailliard. In *The Condor*, September, 1932, W. E. Unglish records the taking of three nests with eggs in May, 1907, about four miles from Gilroy. From this it would appear that the above is the first record of successful raising of Black-chinned Hummingbirds in the San Francisco Bay region.

In Bent's *Life Histories of Hummingbirds* is recorded several instances of Black-chinned Hummingbirds building a new nest on the foundation of the previous year's home, and also that sometimes two or three broods are raised in a season. We would suggest that this nest be left and watched for further developments.

The following is the list of thirty-eight species seen by Mesdames Kelly and Stephens only, as none has been received from the group making the entire trip: Turkey Vulture; Quail; Black-chinned and Anna Hummingbirds; California Woodpecker; Red-shafted Flicker; Black Phoebe; Western Flycatcher; Violet-green Swallow; Crested and California Jays; Crow; Plain Titmouse; Chickadee; Bush-tit; Wren-tit; Bewick and House Wrens; Russet-backed and Hermit Thrushes; Robin; Western Bluebird; Warbling and Hutton Vireos; Creeper; Lutescent, Yellow and Pileolated Warblers; Meadowlark; Black-headed Grosbeak; House Finch; Green-backed Goldfinch; Spotted and Brown Towhees; Lark Sparrow; Junco; Chipping and Song Sparrow.

Laura A. Stephens.

Arizona Hooded Oriole

In the June issue of THE GULL in the article on Arizona Hooded Oriole, the last sentence reads "The nest still remains but the orioles have evidently departed." Since this was published the male oriole was seen feeding a young one in another garden near the original nesting site. He would fly about half a mile across the Greenbrae marsh before returning with food.

L. A. S.



Audubon Notes

July Meeting: The regular meeting will be held on Thursday evening, the 10th, at 8 o'clock, in the Old Mint Building, Fifth and Mission Streets.

Mrs. Otis H. Smith will commence the first of a series of bird talks by our members which it is planned to have at each meeting, describing our common birds. Taking as her subject the California Quail, Mrs. Smith will discuss field recognition marks, voice, habits, related species, economic value, range and abundance in such a manner that the subject should be of interest to the advanced bird student as well as to the beginner.

Following this talk colored motion pictures will be shown: a reel of California Waterfowl, loaned by Mr. Jefferson Doolittle, of San Francisco, and two reels of educational film, "Ice Peaks of the Cascades," to be shown by the Travel Bureau, U. S. Department of the Interior.



July Field Trip will be taken on Sunday, the 13th, to Land's End and the Cliff House for water birds. Meet at the end of "C" Municipal car line at 9:30

a.m. Bring luncheon, after which the group will return by street car to the Presidio in the vicinity of the Marine Hospital.



August Field Trip. A request for suggestions for an August trip will be appreciated. Kindly send them to Miss Frances J. Blake, 1505 Holly Street, Berkeley.



June Meeting: The 286th regular meeting was held on Thursday, the 12th, in the Old Mint Building, with thirty-one members and guests present. President James Moffitt presiding.

Mrs. Dorothy Dean Sheldon gave some details of the National Audubon Society's State Convention at Monterey, especially about the photographic contest for which 140 entries were received, describing some of the prize pictures and giving the names of the winners. She also showed some pictures and to the surprise of all a motion picture taken of the boat trip to see Black-footed Albatrosses in which several of our members appeared.

Audubon Association of the Pacific

Organized January 25, 1917

For the Study and the Protection of Birds

President.....	Mr. James Moffitt.....	California Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco
Corresponding Secretary.....	Mr. Joseph J. Webb.....	519 California St., San Francisco
Treasurer and Editor.....	Mrs. A. B. Stephens.....	1695 Filbert St., San Francisco
Associate Editor.....	Mr. David G. Nichols.....	1713 Dwight Way, Berkeley

Monthly meeting second Thursday, 8 p.m., Little Theatre, Old U. S. Mint Building,
Fifth and Mission Streets.

Membership dues, payable January 1st, \$3.00 per year.

Student memberships, \$1.50 per year. Life memberships, \$50.00.

Members are responsible for dues until written notice of resignation is received by Treasurer.